

1975

Liszt Ensemble  
Effective at Hunter

If the Franz Liszt Chamber Orchestra of Budapest, which appeared here for the first time last Sunday afternoon at Hunter College, wasn't really good enough to make one forget similar ensembles, it still managed to make music in a pleasant, effective manner.

The orchestra, founded in 1962 by Frigyes Sandor (who conducted the otherwise conductorless ensemble during the only piece of contemporary music on the program), consists of 17 graduates of the Franz Liszt Academy in Budapest.

To judge from the proficiency of the concertmaster, Janos Rolla, and the first cellist, Maria Frank, in a Vivaldi concerto, the individual expertise of the Hungarian group is not comparable to, say, first-desk players of major orchestras. But the overall precision and tone sounded first-rate at its best—the opening of Handel Concerto Grosso in G minor (Op. 6, No. 6)—and perfectly satisfactory elsewhere.

The rest of the program was made up of a most attractive study in contemporary string-writing effects allied to more traditional structural and expressive concerns by Andras Szollosy called Concerto No. 3; Bartók's Divertiment for Strings (lively if slightly undernourished, what with fewer than the 22 players the composer specified as a minimum), and Bach's Concerto in D minor.

If one regretted a piano soloist for the Bach (especially with a good harpsichordist in Zsuzsa Pertis on hand), Gyorgy Nador almost compensated with a classically spare, nimbly light account.

JOHN ROCKWELL

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